

REMARKS

The Office allows claims 1-15, 25, and 27-29, rejects claims 16, 22, and 26, and objects to claims 17-21, 23, and 24. Applicant cancels claims 16, 22, and 26 without disclaimer or prejudice and amends claims 17-19, 23, and 24. Claims 1-15, 17-21, 23-25, and 27-29 (9 independent claims; 26 total claims) remain pending in the application.

The Office objects to claims 17-21, 23, and 24 and indicates that claims 17-21, 23, and 24 would be allowable if rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 17-19, 23, and 24 have been amended to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 20 and 21 have not been amended, because they now depend from an allowable base claim, namely claim 19. Thus, claims 17-19, 23, and 24 are allowable as amended and claims 20 and 21 are allowable as dependent upon an allowable base claim.

Support for the various amendments may be found in the originally filed specification, claims, and figures. No new matter has been introduced by these amendments. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. §102 REJECTIONS

The Office rejects claims 16, 22, and 26 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Koudo.¹

Applicant cancels claims 16, 22, and 26, so that the rejection of these claims is moot. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection.

¹ U.S. Patent No. 6,445,657, issued September 3, 2002.

CONCLUSION

Thus, the Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is thus requested. Applicant invites the Office to telephone the undersigned if he or she has any questions whatsoever regarding this Response or the present application in general.

Respectfully submitted,

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